

# Robb, Sharon Child Minding

Forres

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
14 February 2024

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003904949

**Service no:**  
CS2003009020

## About the service

Ms Robb is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age; of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is situated in rural hamlet close to a town. Children are cared for in a playroom, that is adjacent to a kitchen and a downstairs bathroom. There is a large fenced garden to the rear of the property that has a large lawn and patio area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 February 2024 between 11.45 and 15:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children using the service
- Contacted five parents/carers
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and daily experiences
- Reviewed documents.

## Key messages

The childminder's warmth and kindness towards the children enabled them to feel valued, loved and secure.

The childminder encouraged the children to try things out for themselves and to explore with different play resources.

The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis.

To enhance the quality of the service to children and families, the childminder should embed and sustain the programme of continuous improvement.

Children were having fun in their play that was enabling them to learn and develop well.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children's overall wellbeing was being well supported through the caring and nurturing interactions of the childminder. Their calm and thoughtful responses helped children to form positive relationships.

A child experienced dignity and respect during personal care. The childminder's warm interactions, talking with the child throughout, helped them to feel assured and secure. Whilst none of the children needed to sleep, an area within the playroom had large cushions and blankets. It enabled children to take time to relax and recuperate as needed, although we did suggest the area could perhaps be more cosy and inviting. Ref: Space to grow- section 2 environment - space for children - [hub.careinspectorate.com](https://hub.careinspectorate.com).

Children enjoyed eating their lunch together, it was unhurried and there was a relaxed atmosphere. It was a positive social experience where children chatted with each other and the childminder was focused on their needs. Children enjoyed being involved in the preparation and delivery of the meal, spreading and choosing their own fruit, which supported their independence skills. Food choices reflected current guidance and were appropriate for children's individual cultural and dietary needs. Children had fresh water with their meal and water bottles were readily accessible, so that they were able to remain hydrated throughout the day.

Families had been involved in the initial creation of their child's plan personal plan that supported children's wellbeing. School aged children had been invited to complete their own 'all about me' form (children tell you about themselves in their own words) in the past. Although, the information had not been consistently reviewed with families and the child (where able) so that it was updated to reflect children's needs. Such practice helped families to remain central to information sharing, to promote continuity of care and enabled the childminder to respond to changes (see area for improvement 1). Chronologies detailed significant information that also helped the childminder to assist with the identification of children's needs, that directed action to support children. Parents agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, development and learning and that their child had opportunities to be involved in meaningful, interesting and fun play experiences.

### 1.3 Play and Learning

Children were able to move around the safely and independently, they made informed choices about their play. The childminder encouraged the children to try things out for themselves and to explore with different play resources. Their holistic and nurturing approaches to children's wellbeing and right to play supported children's emotional resilience. Children were happy and confident and played well with each other.

Children benefited from spontaneous and planned play experiences that helped to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. The childminder had got to know the needs and interests of each of the children well and promoted children's choice. The conversations they had with children helped with speech development and supported quality play. Children told us that how they had made batter as it was pancake day, they were clearly having fun practicing how to flip the pancakes.

Children were creative with playdough and used different utensils to make shapes and patterns. They enjoyed cutting pictures and gluing, and also using rulers to measure and talked about lengths and numbers. A child also showed us how they had been threading with different beads. Children were confident and helped themselves to play resources or asked the childminder for help. We spoke about the benefits of real and open-ended (no fixed purpose) materials that also inspired children's creativity and challenge. Ref: growing my potential practice note and our creative journey - [hub.careinspectorate.com](http://hub.careinspectorate.com).

Children spent a short time outside showing us the garden. They confidently put on their own outdoor clothing that supported their independence and motor skills (muscle development). They were clearly comfortable and enjoyed outdoor play, they showed us pebbles they had painted and the fairy house. Children enjoyed the ride on toys and kicking balls, active play supported their emotional and psychological wellbeing. A large sand pit was available but was not being used due to the inclement weather and fresh sand being needed. There were some tyres which the childminder said children enjoyed using to make obstacle courses. We spoke about the benefits of a mix of large loose parts play materials that enhanced imaginative and exploratory play outdoors. Ref: Loose-Parts-Play-Toolkit.

The childminder recognised children's achievements and shared photographs with parents. The childminder was in the process of embedding a meaningful method of observation and assessment that monitored children's progress. They spoke favourably about the approach they had introduced, it would help to ensure that children were developing a broad range of skills.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections with their own and wider communities. Children visited an outdoor play area at a local castle, walks in woodlands and beaches, local cafes and soft play, eco village and a local toddler group.

### Areas for improvement

1. To support children's overall wellbeing through information sharing with children and families, the childminder should establish a consistent system of review of the personal plan, a minimum of six monthly.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

### How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children benefited from being cared for in a comfortable, well furnished and homely environment. We suggested that a tidy of the kitchen and bathroom may provide a less cluttered feeling and add to the welcoming environment. Windows provided ample ventilation and natural light, that contributed to children's psychological wellbeing.

The childminder had implemented infection control practices that followed best practice guidance to support children's safety. They included, disposable gloves and aprons for the purposes of nappy changing and good hand hygiene. The childminder had completed first aid training so that they were able to respond appropriately should an accident occur. The childminder had complied with food hygiene legislation to support safe food practices. To further support the safety and wellbeing of the children, we discussed the benefits of reviewing and updating risk assessments for the home/garden and outings in the community. Ref: Keeping children safe practice notes - [hub.careinspectorate.com](https://www.careinspectorate.com/hub/keeping-children-safe-practice-notes).

Children had space to play and explore in the designated play room. The playroom had been arranged to promote children's choice in their play, such as open shelving and low storage boxes. The height of shelving meant that not all resources were easily accessible to the children but they had been arranged so that the majority were visible to the children. The childminder was aware of children's interests and supported access to materials that may be out of reach. A large garden was accessed from the kitchen, it provided lots of space for active and creative play.

## How good is our leadership?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Throughout the inspection, the natural interactions that the childminder had with the children demonstrated that they had got to know them and their family circumstances well. Children were well supported to lead and make choices in their learning and initiate play.

The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis. Parents strongly agreed that they were given good quality information about their child's day. A refresh of the vision, values and aims of the setting that were created with children and families, would help to develop a shared vision for the service. We discussed this with the childminder.

The service improvement plan was focused on a review and update of the service policies and procedures to ensure that they reflected current good practice and the Health and Social Care Standards. Children and families views were beginning to be sought as part of the process, to inform development of the setting.

The childminder had accepted the support of the childminder development officer to establish a purposeful format to assist with monitoring improvement and quality of the service and measuring the impact of changes. The childminder appeared motivated to focus on the ethos of continuous improvement although it was at it's early stages (see area for improvement 1). We also suggested that recording changes as they occurred, helped to support self-evaluation and a continuous approach to improvement.

## Areas for improvement

1. To enhance the quality of the service to children and families, the childminder should embed and sustain the programme of continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership' (HSCS 4.7); and

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19)

## How good is our staff team?

**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder's warmth and kindness towards the children enabled them to feel valued, loved and secure. Through our discussion it was clear that the childminder was attuned and responsive to the individual needs of the children that helped to form close attachments.

The childminder was experienced and held a relevant early years qualification that supported their skills and knowledge. To support professional development that enhanced outcomes for children the childminder had refreshed training in first aid and child protection. They had also completed training in food hygiene, self-improvement planning and an introduction to infant mental health. We discussed the benefits of continued access to training and use of good practice guidance. Ref: [hub.careinspectorate.com](http://hub.careinspectorate.com). Maintaining a record of the impact of training would support reflection and learning, and the difference it had made to children.

The childminder interacted with the children in a sensitive and responsive way to promote their independence and confidence. They recognised the importance of children having fun in their play and enabling them to learn and develop. Parents strongly agreed they were confident the childminder was nurturing and responsive to their child's needs.

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

The childminder should increase her knowledge of current guidance and best practice, some of which can be accessed via <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media>. She should then use these to evaluate her service and identify areas for development which support positive outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

**This area for improvement was made on 20 November 2018.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder was in the process of reviewing and updating all the service policies and procedures. Current guidance and best practice was being used for such purpose that was helping to increase her knowledge and support improvement.

**This area for improvement has been met.**

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).



## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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